

**REMARKS**

In item 2 of the office action, claims 10-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 for anticipation by Martin. This is respectfully traversed.

The distinctive features of claim 10 not shown in Martin are:

“means for extracting messaging information, required to recreate the supercarrier signal from the trib signals after transmission, according to said first protocol, from the supercarrier signal and inserting said messaging information into the trib signals.”

The closest that Martin seems to show is extracting “TMux Msg bytes” and generating or passing through the remaining trib TOH. However this is not messaging information required to recreate the supercarrier signal, it is only messaging information for the trib signal, and is not sufficient to recreate the supercarrier signal. Since the present claims are concerned with transparent demultiplexing to maintain a higher rate protocol over a lower rate span, the messaging information is different. It is the messaging information of the higher rate protocol, the supercarrier, which is passed through transparently, not the messaging information of the lower rate protocol. Claims 11-19 have corresponding distinctive features and so are not anticipated for the same reasons.

In items 3 and 4, claims 1-5 and 7-8 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 for obviousness over Martin and Martin2. Again this is respectfully traversed.

The critical point of this rejection seems to be the assertion that Martin2 shows the feature of claim 1 of “transparently remultiplexing the trib signals into the supercarrier signal”. Just like Martin, Martin 2 does show multiplexing tribs into a supercarrier, followed by demultiplexing at a far end to recover the original tribs. However nowhere in the text, figures or claims is there any hint of doing the opposite, that is

taking a supercarrier, demultiplexing it into tribs, then remultiplexing at the far end to recreate the supercarrier as claimed in claim 1.

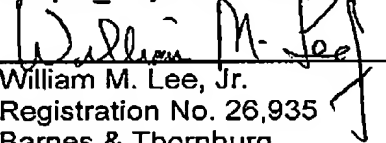
The cited figures 9A – 9C and text passage at cols 9 and 10 of Martin2 do not show these distinctive features as will now be explained in more detail. They show how the OC-48 rings of Fig 9A can be upgraded one at a time either as shown in Fig 9B or Fig 9C. In both Figs 9B and 9C one of the OC-48 rings has been upgraded to OC192. In Fig 9B there are two paths between locations 29 and 29', where the rings overlap. In Fig 9C the overlap of the two rings uses a single path, since the OC-48 ring is transparently multiplexed onto the high capacity OC-192 path.

For these reasons Martin2 does not show the distinctive features of claim 1. As there is no disclosure or suggestion of these features in any of the prior art, claim 1 is not anticipated nor obvious. The other claims have corresponding features and are submitted to be allowable for the same reasons.

All of the points raised by the examiner have now been dealt with and favorable reconsideration is requested

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Respectfully submitted,

  
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